

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

by

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FLOOD PROJECT INTEGRITY AND INSPECTION BRANCH

California's Public Law 84-99 Eligibility Retention and Flood System Improvement Framework (formerly called "Draft Levee Vegetation Plan for California's State Flood Project")

Framework Development Process

The original Levee Vegetation Plan was distributed to the Levee Roundtable group for review in late February and comments were submitted back to DWR in early March. Comments were generally favorable from the resource agencies, although they preferred to see more context throughout the document including history, summary of DWR efforts, species affected, conflicts with ESA, existing science, etc.; however, the Corps and some other Roundtable members felt there was too much context information regarding the history of the flood project and the presence of vegetation on levees at turnover. The Corps commented that the State should develop an action plan for complying with the Corps policy including milestones and timelines.

At the March 14 Roundtable meeting, and in a subsequent meeting with a subgroup of the Roundtable, members discussed several policy issues regarding the levee vegetation issue in an attempt to come to agreement on what the Corps was hoping to achieve. The members agreed that levee vegetation was not the only important factor that needed to be addressed to reduce risk, so they agreed the document should include other important system-wide flood control issues that the State is addressing over time. Following these meetings, DWR staff met with Corps Sacramento District staff to outline the contents of the document that would satisfy Corps Headquarters.

Summary of Framework

The goal of the Framework is to convince Corps Headquarters to allow California to retain PL84-99 eligibility while system deficiencies are being addressed. To retain PL84-99 eligibility, and as suggested by the Corps Sacramento District, the Framework includes more detailed information on the State's efforts to reduce risk throughout the Flood Control System in the Central Valley and statewide. These efforts include progress to date, planned activities, milestones, and timelines for all DFM programs. The Framework is broken up into short-term and long-term components, with the focus being on short-term actions to reduce risk. The short-term framework will improve public safety by improving inspections and maintenance and constructing "no regrets projects" in high risk urban areas. The improved maintenance will strategically remove levee vegetation to provide visibility for levee inspections, access for flood fight efforts, and access for all types of maintenance.

The draft "California's Public Law 84-99 Eligibility Retention and Flood System Improvement Framework" was sent out to the Roundtable members on May 5, 2008 for review and final approval is scheduled at the May 9 Roundtable meeting.

FLOOD PROJECT MODIFICATIONS & PERMITS BRANCH

Early Implementation Program

Decision Memoranda were executed by DWR's Director on April 25, 2008 for Levee District No. 1 of Sutter County, Reclamation District No. 2103, and Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. The Decision Memo for Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority was signed in late March 2008, as reported last month.

Funding Agreements for the Three Rivers Levee was fully executed in late April 2008. Staff processed the first quarterly work plan invoice covering April, May and June of 2008 and Three Rivers received a wire transfer of over \$10 million dollars on May 6, 2008. Staff is in the final stages of preparing the funding agreements for the remaining three EIP projects. We expect to have full contract execution and first quarterly work plan invoices paid prior to the end of the current fiscal year.

Project funding for the four Early Implementation Program projects are:

- Three Rivers Levee Improvement Authority – Total cost \$201.3 million, estimated maximum State cost share: \$138.5 million.
- Levee District No. 1 of Sutter County: Lower Feather River Setback Levee at Star Bend – Total cost: \$14.7 million, estimated maximum State cost share: \$7.35 million
- Reclamation District No. 2103: Bear River North Levee Rehabilitation Project – Total cost: \$14.7 million, estimated maximum State cost share: \$7.35 million
- Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency: Natomas Levee Improvement Program (NLIP) Early Start Program – Total NLIP cost \$227 million; total cost of Natomas Cross Canal South Levee element of NLIP: \$73.4 million; estimated maximum State cost share: \$49 million.

Local Levee Feasibility Studies Program

Local Levees Urgent Repair Program

In addition to the Early Implementation Projects, the Branch is implementing these two programs for the non-federal levees. These are Statewide competitive programs (excluding the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta) to provide state cost share funding to local agencies for projects to evaluate and make urgent repairs to non-federal levees, especially those at risk of FEMA decertification. Staff opened a brief public comment period on the Guidelines in late April. The finalized Guidelines and Program Solicitation Package (PSP) were posted on the FloodSAFE website as of April 28, 2008. Staff is preparing to hold a public workshop to roll out the Program and answer questions on the PSP on May 14, 2008 in the Resources Building Auditorium. The workshop will be webcast and will be posted for viewing on the FloodSAFE website.

Garmire Road Bridge Replacement

The contractor, MCM Construction, mobilized equipment to the Garmire Road Bridge site in early April. The field trailer has been set up, clearing and grubbing performed where required, and submittals have been received. As of May 1, Abutment 10 piles are driven and pier footings 8 and 9 have been excavated. Abutment 10 is expected to be framed and poured in the next day or two. Groundwater has been encountered on foundation excavations which required de-watering. However, the Contractor drove 12 pipe piles in one day for Abutment 10 and the Contractor is expecting to stay ahead of schedule and complete the bridge this year and demolish the existing bridge next year.

Mercury Control Program

The Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board conducted a testimony hearing on April 24 and 25, 2008 to receive input from Regional Water Board staff and interested parties for the proposed Basin Plan Amendments for a Mercury Control Program for the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta Estuary. DWR Staff Counsel Laurence Kerckhoff presented an overview of potential impacts to the Department from the proposed Basin Plan Amendment and Total Maximum Daily Load. Comments were developed using input of staff from a variety of DWR programs, including the Division of Flood Management. DWR comments focused primarily on potential impacts to ongoing resource recovery and flood protection projects, and identified our willingness to work cooperatively to address potential issues. The Regional Water Board chairman and several other board members were very receptive to the DWR presentation, and instructed their staff to work with the stakeholders, specifically DWR, to address the issues raised. A meeting between DWR and Water Board staff has been tentatively scheduled for May 12th.

Colusa State Recreation Area Mitigation Site

Approximately 139 acres of the Colusa-Sacramento River State Recreation Area will be converted from its existing agricultural use to a riparian forest and meadow. The riparian habitat restoration will serve as mitigation for the Tisdale Bypass Sediment Removal Project and for advanced mitigation for future maintenance activities. The Tisdale Sediment Removal Project removed approximately 1.85 million cubic yards of sediment and riparian vegetation in the Tisdale Bypass to increase the capacity for flood flows. The restoration project was reviewed and approved by the Central Valley Flood Protection Board in December of 2007. An Interagency Agreement between the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) will be executed to provide DWR the right to enter and construct the mitigation project and to allow various agencies to inspect and maintain the habitat area as needed. The design is 95% complete, and the native plant species are currently being propagated. The irrigation system will be installed in October 2008 and planting is scheduled for the spring of 2009.

LEVEE REPAIRS BRANCH

Sacramento River Bank Protection Project (SRBPP)

Repairs for eight sites (Cache Slough 21.8R, Steamboat Slough 16.6R, Sac 49.7L, Sac 52.3L, Sac 53.5R, Sac 177.8R, American 0.3L, American 2.8L) are planned for this year. The Corps is Lead Agency for design and construction and DWR is providing environmental permitting, right-of-way and borrow materials for these sites.

The Corps is postponing signing Amendment to PAC for additional 80,000 lineal feet authorization as it has to go through EIR/EIS approval by Secretary of the Army. The 1986 Programmatic EIR/EIS is not acceptable to regulatory agencies and the Corps's current policy is to develop a new EIR/EIS every five years. The remaining 21,000 lineal feet authorization under the SRBPP program provides sufficient authority for two more years of repair work.

San Joaquin River Flood Protection Critical Repair Sites

Geotechnical field investigations, surveying and initial environmental assessments for three sites; San Joaquin River Mile 42.3, Paradise Cut (levee mile 3.8) and Mormon Slough (levee mile 33.0), have been completed. Engineering and environmental design is under review.

A draft Corps/Central valley Flood Protection Board Work Agreement for the Lower San Joaquin Levee District San Joaquin reaches upstream and downstream of the Chowchilla Bypass is under review and will be presented to the Board at the June Meeting. DWR and the Corps have agreed to a joint solution to seepage and 2006 flood damage repairs which will require DWR to pay about \$5 million for improvements towards PL84-99 repairs.

2006 Public Law (PL) 84-99 Rehabilitation Assistance Program

The Corps is lead agency for PL84-99 repairs and is moving forward to start repairs on 70 sites. DWR is providing environmental permitting, rights-of-way and borrow materials for these sites. In all, there are 22 Order 2 and 139 Orders 3, 4 and 5 remaining sites to be repaired.

LEEVE EVALUATIONS BRANCH

The Levee Evaluations Branch was created to perform geotechnical levee evaluations on about 350 miles of urban levee. An urban levee is defined as protecting at least 10,000 people. The geotechnical levee evaluations will focus on the urban project levees in geographic areas of Reclamation District (RD) 17, RD 404, Natomas, West Sacramento, Marysville, Woodland, Davis, Stockton, MA9, the American River, Sacramento, the Sutter Basin, and RD 784. This program is in the process of expanding to other areas within the Sacramento and San Joaquin Flood Control Projects with the Bond funding.

The purpose of these evaluations is to assist in developing a levee certification program based on geotechnical data, provide consistent formats for data (and associated data exchange), and provide an evaluation of the levee system based on geotechnical data. This evaluation will be conducted with the goal of providing 200 year level of protection in urban areas and the design profile level of protection in rural areas using the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) under seepage criteria.

General

1. The Levee Evaluations Branch is working closely with RD 17, Natomas (SAFCA and RD 1000), Three Rivers, LD 1, others within the Department and the Corps to review issues concerning early implementation projects.
2. Weekly coordination meetings with the Corps continue so that subsurface explorations plans are approved in advance of work and also so as to not duplicate efforts.
3. The Levee Evaluations Branch is continuing to assist the Floodplain Mapping Office with evaluating rates and scope of services for the geotechnical portion of their four Central Valley mapping contracts.
4. Rate negotiations are continuing for the non-urban levee evaluation contracts.
5. The eighth Independent Consulting Board Meeting concerning levee evaluations was held on March 31 through April 2, 2008.

The work performed in March broken into three geographic urban levee areas of North, Central and South is as follows:

North

1. *Sutter Basin*: Comments from the Draft Phase 1 Geotechnical Evaluation Report (P1GER) QA/QC review have been received from DOE and are being incorporated into an updated version of the P1GER for distribution to local stakeholders in June. USACE is still reviewing this report. Additional supplemental explorations are planned for June 2008.
2. *Marysville*: Final USACE review comments to the Draft P1GER have not been received. Currently 9 piezometers are in the process of being installed. Additional supplemental explorations will be performed in June 2008.

Central

1. The Supplemental Geotechnical Data Report (SGDR) for West Sacramento is underway. The Draft Phase 1 Geotechnical Data Report (P1GDR) for the Sacramento River east bank levees is underway and expected to be completed during the latter part of May. This report will undergo an internal QA/QC process and USACE review. The report will then be updated for local stakeholder release and review in July 2008.
2. A Draft P1GDR for the NEMDC portion of the Natomas levees was completed and is expected to be delivered to DWR during the latter part of May. The P1GER for NEMDC is underway. Several planning meetings and a design workshop were conducted with the Corps, DWR, SAFCA, and stakeholders regarding the remediation of the levee system in Natomas. Review of the extensive geotechnical information for these remaining areas is underway.
3. Field explorations are scheduled to commence along the American River levees during the latter part of May. There will be a relatively limited number of explorations due to the existence of cutoff walls already constructed along a significant portion of the American River levees.
4. Field exploration has been completed on levees protecting Davis in April 2008. Laboratory testing of the collected data will occur in May/June 2008.
5. The Phase One Subsurface Investigation Work Plan for Woodland was finalized. Field exploration commenced in April 2008 on the Yolo Bypass west levee and the south and west levees of the Cache Creek Settling Basin. Various coordination meetings were held with the Corps, USFWS and local stakeholders.

South

1. Piezometers are planned to be installed for SJAFCA in May 2008.
2. A Draft P1GDR for SJAFCA is expected to be delivered to DWR during the latter part of May.
3. A Draft P1GDR for RD 404 is expected to be delivered to DWR during the latter part of May.
4. Bathymetric data was collected along the San Joaquin River and data post-processing is ongoing.

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